Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of the claims:

1. (previously presented) A computer readable medium having instructions for causing a computer to execute a method for segmenting customers by promotion, said method comprising:

segmenting each customer in a plurality of customers into a segment in a plurality of segments for each promotion in a plurality of promotions, such that for a promotion there is a corresponding set of segments, wherein each segment in said set of segments represents a first respective group of customers having a certain response to said promotion;

separating, based on responses to said plurality of promotions, said plurality of customers into a plurality of meta-segments, wherein each meta-segment in said plurality of meta-segments represents a second respective group of customers sharing a same response to all promotions in said plurality of promotions; and

using the plurality of meta-segments to design a promotional campaign.

2. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 1 comprising:

specifying a number of meta-segments based on customer demographics, wherein said customer demographics define characteristics of said plurality of customers.

3. (original) The method as recited in claim 2 wherein said number of meta-segments is specified such that the maximum number of customers are represented by said meta-segments.

4. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 2 further comprising

executing an algorithm for determining a number of customers in each meta-segment to receive a particular promotion.

5. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 1 wherein said segmenting each

customer is accomplished using a segmentation method selected from the group consisting of CART (Classification and Regression Tree), k-means, k-harmonic means and clustering.

6. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 1 wherein said separating said plurality of customers comprises:

associating with each customer a vector representing a combination of a segment and a promotion.

7. (previously presented) A method of software execution for segmenting customers by promotion, said method comprising:

receiving information for a customer describing said customer's response to each promotion in a plurality of promotions;

segmenting said customer into a segment for said each promotion, wherein for each promotion there is a corresponding set of segments, wherein each segment in said set of segments represents a first respective group of customers having a certain response to said promotion;

placing, based on said customer's response to said plurality of promotions, said customer into a meta-segment in a plurality of meta-segments, wherein said meta-segment represents a second respective group of customers having a common response to all promotions in said plurality of promotions; and

developing an advertising campaign with information from the meta-segments.

8. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 7 further comprising:

selecting a subset of said meta-segments based on customer demographics, wherein said subset is limited to a specified number of meta-segments and wherein said customer demographics define characteristics of said plurality of customers.

9. (original) The method as recited in claim 8 wherein said subset of meta-segments is selected such that said specified number of meta-segments represents the maximum number of customers.

10. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 8 further comprising:

determining a particular promotion to be provided to said customer.

11. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 7 wherein said segmenting said customer is accomplished using a segmentation method selected from the group consisting of CART (Classification and Regression Tree), k-means, k-harmonic means and clustering.

12. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 7 wherein said placing said customer comprises:

associating with said customer a vector representing a combination of a segment and a promotion.

13. (currently amended) A computer implemented method for segmenting customers by promotion, said method comprising:

recording information characterizing a response from each customer in a plurality of customers to each promotion in a plurality of promotions;

segmenting each customer into a segment of plural segments, each segment including customers who share a common response to one of the plurality of promotions;

separating, based on responses from each customer to said plurality of promotions, said plurality of customers in said plural segments into a plurality of meta-segments, wherein each meta-segment in said plurality of meta-segments represents a respective group of customers sharing a common response to all promotions in said plurality of promotions; and

optimizing a promotional campaign from information of the meta-segments.

14. (currently amended) The method as recited in claim 13 wherein ~~said recording information comprises:~~

~~segmenting each customer in said plurality of customers into a segment in a plurality of segments for each promotion in said plurality of promotions, such that~~ for a

promotion there is a corresponding set of segments such that~~, wherein~~ each segment in said set of segments represents a respective group of customers having a certain response to said promotion.

15. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 14 wherein said segmenting each customer is accomplished using a segmentation method selected from the group consisting of CART (Classification and Regression Tree), k-means, k-harmonic means and clustering.

16. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 14 wherein said segmenting each customer comprises:

associating with each customer a vector representing a combination of a segment and a promotion.

17. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 14 further comprising:

specifying a number of meta-segments based on customer demographics, wherein said customer demographics define characteristics of said plurality of customers.

18. (original) The method as recited in claim 17 wherein said number of meta-segments is specified such that the maximum number of customers are represented by said meta-segments.

19. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 17 further comprising:

executing an algorithm for determining a number of customers in each meta-segment to receive a particular promotion.

20. (new) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein customers in a same segment share a common response only to a single promotion while customers in a same meta-segment share a common response to all promotions.